Rev Dr Prince
from his friend
the Author
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Dr. PRINCE's

FAST SERMON,

MAY 9, 1798.

A

DISCOURSE,

DELIVERED AT

SALEM,

ON THE DAY OF THE

NATIONAL FAST,

MAY 9, 1798;

APPOINTED BY

PRESIDENT ADAMS,

On account of the difficulties subsisting between the United States and France.

BY JOHN PRINCE, LL. D.
MINISTER OF THE FIRST CONGREGATIONAL SOCIETY IN SALEM.

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1 TIMOTHY, ii. 1, 2, 3.

I exhort, therefore, that, firſt of all, ſupplications, prayers, interceſſions, and giving of thanks, be made for all men; for kings, and for all that are in authority; that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life, in all godlineſs and honeſty. For this is good and acceptable in the ſight of God our ſaviour.

ST. PAUL, in theſe words, addreſſed to Timothy, a chriſtian miniſter, points out the duty of praying for civil magiſtrates; exhorts him to teach it to his hearers, and ſet an example of it in his own public performances. By the words "firſt of all," he ſeems to conſider it as an *eſſential* duty of chriſtians to pray "for all men; and by "giving of thanks," that chriſtians ſhould feel intereſted in the happineſs of their fellow-men, and bear on their hearts and tongues a thankful remembrance and acknowledgment of God's favours to them. They ſhould conſider mankind in the extenſive view of brethren, deriving their exiſtence from one common PARENT, enjoying his common bleſſings, and living under his providential government. Having ſpoken of the duty generally, he proceeds to a particular deſcription of characters to be prayed for: they ſhould pray "for kings, and all that are in authority;" that is, for the ſupreme magiſtrate, and all inferior and ſubordinate officers who hold the power and authority of government under him. The whole civil government is to be the ſubject of prayer, ſupplications, and interceſſions; that it may be juſtly and wiſely adminiſtered; ſo that all the people, who live under it, may "lead

quiet and peaceable lives, in all godlineſs and honeſty." Such effects of the adminiſtration of government will naturally make it the ſubject of thankſgiving: for the peaceable enjoyment of life and property, under the protection of good laws, is the greateſt temporal bleſſing mankind can have.

As the goſpel is deſigned to promote the happineſs of man, both in this life and that which is to come, it furniſhes him with ſuch ſentiments, and enjoins ſuch duties on him, as are adapted to his preſent and future condition. While it teaches a ſpiritual obedience to Chriſt, with an ultimate view to his future, glorious kingdom, it alſo enjoins a temporal obedience to the civil magiſtrate, and the laws of ſociety, as neceſſary to the preſent happineſs of mankind.

CHRISTIANITY is friendly to all thoſe ſocial and civil inſtitutions of men, which are calculated to promote their improvement and happineſs, notwithſtanding all that has been ſaid by its enemies to bring it into diſrepute and diſcredit, by repreſenting it as a ſyſtem of ſuperſtition, inimical to the true enjoyments of life: and I may add, notwithſtanding all that has been done, by its miſtaken friends, to force it upon unbelievers, by ſuch cruel means as have betrayed the want of that humanity it ſo ſtrongly recommends. This divine religion breathes the ſpirit of pure philanthropy, and inculcates the precepts of ſocial life. It forbids no pleaſure which can be innocently and ſafely purſued: it lays no reſtrictions, but what are beneficial to men; and it cultivates, to the higheſt degree, that virtuous temper and conduct which are eſſential to the well-being of ſociety.*

But however excellent this ſyſtem appears in itſelf, when examined apart from thoſe abſurd dogmas, which have at times been incorporated with its pure and benevolent doctrines, when ſeparated from the erroneous and wicked conduct of ſome of its profeſſors, it has nevertheleſs

* This and a few other paragraphs were not delivered from the pulpit; but it has been deſired the whole might be printed.

theleſs met with oppoſition. However well adapted its principles are to the real wants and condition of men, it has always had its enemies, who have oppoſed its progreſs in the world. Theſe enemies have either been men who were "too wiſe in their own conceits" to reliſh the plainneſs and ſimplicity of the goſpel; or too ignorant and weak to break over the pale of prejudice, and venture upon a new ground of faith; or ſuch as were too corrupt and vicious to be pleaſed with the purity of its doctrines and precepts, and to ſubmit to its reſtrictions. Though this light has come into the world, ſome men love their own darkneſs rather than this light, becauſe their deeds are evil. And as long as the eyes and actions of men are evil, they will neither look upon chriſtianity with pleaſure, nor love its pure and holy precepts; but they will rather ſlander this religion, which condemns their principles and conduct.

When the goſpel was firſt preached by Chriſt and his apoſtles, mankind were ſunk in the groſſeſt corruption of error and wickedneſs; as St. Paul informs us in the beginning of his epiſtle to the Romans. Addreſſed to ſuch men, it is not ſurpriſing that it met with violent oppoſition from the prejudices of ſome, and the wickedneſs of others; that it was early expoſed to perſecution; and that attempts were made to cruſh it in its infancy. The enemies of chriſtianity have attempted this, by calumniating its doctrines, and charging it with falſe principles; and by aſcribing other views and aims to its teachers. than what they avowed. It was declared to be unfriendly to the civil inſtitutions. The zealots of other religions endeavoured to prejudice the civil rulers againſt it, that they might uſe their power to deſtroy it. They inſinuated, that its doctrines tended to ſubvert civil government, to weaken the reſpect of men for their rulers, and ſap the foundation of their authority. This art was early practiſed by the inſidious enemies of the goſpel, to create alarms in the government againſt it, and excite oppoſition to it; and it has often been uſed ſince.

If we look back in the hiſtory of chriſtianity to the life of its bleſſed founder, the peaceable and pious Jeſus, we ſhall ſee an artful ſnare laid by his enemies to betray him into a treaſonable converſation, in order to expoſe him to the jealouſy and power of the Roman government. By the wiſdom of his teaching, and the manner of his life, he had attracted the notice of the learned and unlearned of his own nation. The Jewiſh rulers ſaw that he was ſetting himſelf up as a leader of a new ſect; that he ſupported his doctrines with irreſiſtible arguments; expoſed and condemned their errors and vices with boldneſs, and great plainneſs of ſpeech. They were alarmed by his diſcourſes, which unveiled to the multitude their corruption, wickedneſs and hypocriſy; and they ſought to ruin him. When he delivered ſome parables, which the Phariſees ſuppoſed to be aimed at them, as a cenſure upon their profeſſion and conduct, they "went and took counſel together how they might entangle him in his talk." They ſent ſome of their diſciples, with the Herodians, to propoſe ſuch queſtions to him as might draw ſomething from him that would expoſe him to the Roman government. Theſe diſciples began their attack in an inſidious manner. They firſt paid him ſome flattering compliments upon his integrity and independence; obſerving, that he was not afraid to ſpeak the truth, and declare his ſentiments boldly. Then they put this queſtion to him: "Tell us, what thinkeſt thou? Is it lawful to give tribute to Ceſar, or not? But Jeſus perceived their wickedneſs, and ſaid, Why tempt ye me, ye hypocrites?" He requeſted to ſee the tribute money, and finding upon it the ſtamp of Ceſar's image, he ſaid to them, "Render unto Ceſar the things which are Ceſar's, and unto God the things that are God's." By this anſwer he avoided the ſnare that was laid for him; ſhewed to the people he had no intention of oppoſing the civil government himſelf under which he lived, or of exciting them to rebellion. On the contrary, he taught them ſubmiſſion

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in the payment of their taxes; that they ought to do ſuch things as were neceſſary for the ſupport of government, as well as thoſe which related immediately to God. His enemies were confounded by his anſwer, and left him. But it ſhews, that he did not mean to intermeddle with the political affairs of the world at that time, or make any change in them by the exerciſe of his power, or encourage a ſpirit of revolt in the Jews. When they would have made him a king, he avoided the intended honour by retiring from them: and when he was requeſted by one to uſe his influence to procure the diviſion of an eſtate, he anſwered, "Man, who made me a judge or a divider over you?" How falſe then was the accuſation brought againſt him by his enemies before Pilate! "We found this fellow perverting the nation, and forbidding to give tribute to Ceſar; ſaying, that he himſelf is Chriſt, a king." And how can it be ſaid that chriſtianity is inimical to government, and ſeeks to eſtabliſh and exalt itſelf upon its ruins? An abominable ſuperſtition, under its borrowed name, may have aimed at this; but not the religion of Jeſus Chriſt. His own preaching and example give the lie to the calumny.

If from the goſpel we turn to the writings of the apoſtles, we ſhall find the ſame diſpoſition manifeſted with reſpect to civil government; the ſame exhortations to a compliance with the duties we owe to it. "Let every ſoul be ſubject to the higher powers," ſays the apoſtle Paul; "for rulers are not a terror to good works, but to the evil. For he (the ruler) is the miniſter of God to thee for good." The apoſtle ſeems evidently to ſpeak here of that government which is ſo conſtituted and adminiſtered as to promote the good of the governed; which is for the praiſe and encouragement of its good ſubjects, and the puniſhment of the bad. "Do that which is good," ſays he, "and thou ſhalt have praiſe of the power; but if thou do that which is evil, be afraid." Such "powers are ordained of God." They are conſtituted for the happineſs of mankind: and

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to ſuch Chriſtianity teaches us a dutiful ſubmiſſion. "Render, therefore, to all their dues: tribute to whom tribute is due; cuſtom to whom cuſtom; fear to whom fear; honour to whom honour."

The goſpel was ſet forth to the Jewiſh converts to chriſtianity as a "law of liberty," becauſe it freed them from the obſervance of the moſaical inſtitutions, which were burdenſome. Theſe converts, or ſome miſtaken men among them, might conclude, that by becoming chriſtians they were likewiſe exempt from obedience to the civil magiſtrate, and were bound only by the inſtitutions of Chriſt. This might occaſion the apoſtle's writing ſo explicitly on the ſubject of civil obedience. But whatever right they had as men to remonſtrate againſt unjuſt and oppreſſive meaſures of government, or to oppoſe tyranny, chriſtianity gave them no particular command to refuſe obedience in matters merely civil. It forbad a compliance with the inſtitutions reſpecting idol-worſhip, becauſe this was incompatible with the worſhip of the true God: and no civil magiſtrate had a right to impoſe on any man the performance of an act ſo contrary to that religious ſervice he owes to God, as his firſt duty. But in civil matters the apoſtles, after the example of their divine Maſter, often enjoined obedience to the ruling power; and taught chriſtians, that their coming under the authority of Chriſt, as their ſpiritual prince, did not deſtroy their allegiance to their temporal ſovereign, nor cancel their obligations to obey his commands, in any thing not contrary to the laws of God, which indeed had a prior claim upon them.

Thus we ſee that the goſpel of Chriſt is not the enemy of civil government; neither is it to any of thoſe ſocial inſtitutions which are beneficial to man. It alſo enjoins the obſervance of all the ſocial duties of life, which ariſe out of the relation of huſband and wife, parent and child, maſter and ſervant, friend and neighbour; extending good will and good offices to all mankind.

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I have been led to make theſe obſervations to you, my hearers, on chriſtianity, as it relates to ſocial and civil life; becauſe much has been ſaid to vilify it, and repreſent it as unfriendly to it. I have noticed the conduct and arts of its enemies in former times, that you may compare them with the conduct of its preſent virulent oppoſers, and ſee their views. Do they tell you it is hoſtile to the rights of mankind; that it binds them in ſervitude, and denies them the real enjoyments of life; this is only to apologize for their own libertiniſm and licentiouſneſs, and to make you as corrupt as themſelves. Look to their conduct, and ſee what that liberty is they propoſe you ſhould enjoy by its deſtruction. Look to the liberty which the goſpel warrants you to exerciſe, and ſee if any thing beyond it can be indulged with ſafety to the common intereſt of ſociety, to the virtue and happineſs of mankind. Do theſe oppoſers of the chriſtian religion declare that it is inimical to a free and good government; that it is the aid and engine of tyranny—if they mean by it a ſyſtem of ſuperſtition which has adopted the name of chriſtianity, but diſcarded or violated its principles, it is not anſwerable for the abuſe or the wickedneſs of that ſuperſtition. Theſe have ariſen from the corrupted heart of man, and not from chriſtianity, which is deſigned to correct that corruption—And it may be aſked, what do the enemies of chriſtianity propoſe in its ſtead, better, or ſo well, adapted to oppoſe that corruption, or guard mankind againſt its effects? Has the experiment, as far as it has been tried hitherto, by thoſe who have diſcarded it, produced any more virtue, ſocial order, and happineſs, than the pure and unadulterated religion of Jeſus Chriſt has, where this has been the rule of ſincere faith and practice? I leave its enemies to anſwer. But whenever they decry this religion, as ſet forth in the new teſtament by Chriſt and his apoſtles, declaring it to be inimical to good government, and the ſocial enjoyments of life, you have, in your own experience, the confutation of the calumny, and juſt ground to miſtruſt their

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apparently good intentions towards you. Do they not mean by ſuch inſinuations to delude you with reſpect to their own political views and conduct—to leſſen the energies of religion in ſupport of a free and upright government, that you may not be "ſubject for conſcience ſake;" but that you may be more eaſily brought to ſubmit to their domination; to that ſyſtem of arbitrary power and univerſal dominion they are aiming to eſtabliſh upon the ruins of religion and virtue? For who are the open and avowed oppoſers of chriſtianity? Are they not thoſe men who are endeavouring to put down all rule and all authority in every nation, that *their* will and power alone may govern the world?

Upon this day then of humiliation and prayer let us pray for the preſervation and continuance of our religious privileges; that the goſpel may remain to us, and its ſacred truths be our guide. It may be aſked, Are we in any danger of loſing it? I anſwer, it has been attacked by men of the above deſcription. And although the goſpel has not been put down by abſolute authority in the revolutionized countries, the ſame inſidious arts have been uſed to prejudice mankind againſt it, as againſt the ancient government, to work the ſame ruin. The abuſes of chriſtianity have been brought to criminate the goſpel itſelf; and the ſacred ſcriptures have been treated, not only with contempt, but with the vileſt inſult. The enemies of chriſtianity have ſucceeded too far elſewhere, by their inſidious arts, not to create cautionary alarms in us. The means they uſe, though apparently weak, are powerful when aided by the corruption of the human heart, and the tempting pleaſures of ſenſuality. If any means appear contemptible in a previous view, yet when they prove ſucceſsful in the experiment, they become important, if the object be important they are uſed to effect. Ridicule may ſometimes effect as much as argument. The habit of ſeeing any perſon or thing treated with contempt may reconcile us to more ſerious operations againſt it. It is thus the enemies of our government endeavour firſt

to leſſen our reſpect and eſteem for our rulers, that they may ultimately attack the government itſelf, and by a bolder hand deſtroy it: and thus they would by artful means weaken our attachments to religion, that they may finally ſucceed in completely overthrowing it. We might be more alarmed if we ſaw the arm of power ſtretched forth to prevent the exerciſe of it: but if it be deſtroyed by any other means, the conſequences may be as injurious to ſociety in a religious view. And he that attempts to undermine the foundation of a beautiful building, and bring it to the ground in ruins, without touching it with his hands, is as much to be feared and guarded againſt, as he who would pull it to pieces by violence.

From theſe workers of underplot we are in danger, and we ought ſeriouſly to guard againſt them. We ought earneſtly to pray to God, that the deſigns formed againſt our religion may not in *any degree* prevail; but that it may be preſerved againſt inſidious attacks, as well as open violence. And let us at the ſame time give thanks to God, that the light of the goſpel ſtill ſheds its mild influence on us; that the word of God has free courſe among us to run and be glorified; that *our* bibles have not yet been ſacrificed on the altars of infidelity, nor our religious liberty overawed and reſtrained by the reign of licentiouſneſs;* but that the light of the goſpel is ſtill the light of our country, to guide our feet in the way of peace and righteouſneſs.

By what has been ſaid, you may ſee how, as *Chriſtians*, you are in duty bound to ſubmit to the inſtitution of government, and obey your civil rulers, when that government is ſo conſtituted and adminiſtered that you may lead quiet and peaceable lives, in all godlineſs and honeſty under it; and that you ought to pray for the continuance and exerciſe of it. This is the duty of every man who would cheriſh the hope in himſelf of entering into the glorious kingdom of Chriſt. For he

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* We have an account, in the relation of the ſiege of Lyons, that a large concourſe of people, on the Lord's day, ſuſpended the old and new teſtament to the tail of an aſs; and, forming a mock proceſſion, led him through the ſtreets to a ſquare, where they threw the bible into the fire prepared for the purpoſe, and made the aſs drink out of the ſacramental cup, in deriſion of chriſtianity.

that is reſtleſs, quarrelſome, and contentious, is not fit for that more perfect ſtate of ſociety, where love is the prevailing motive of action: he has not that peaceable and quiet ſpirit, which is neceſſary to make the kingdom of heaven a place of enjoyment and happineſs to him.

I ſhall now endeavour to lay before you ſome obſervations, to ſhew that this duty of obedience to government is founded in the preſent conſtitution of things, and the nature of man, as well as in the word of God; that his command of civil obedience is to be read in the book of nature, as well as in that of revelation. I ſhall take ſome notice of that conſtitution of government which ſeems beſt adapted to promote the improvement and happineſs of man, as ariſing out of his condition; and offer ſome obſervations on our preſent political circumſtances, and the duty we are called to, under them.

Man, though a rational being, in the rude ſtate in which he is ſometimes found, diſcovers but very little of the exerciſe of reaſon. His faculties lie dormant, undeveloped, and unimproved. From the local ſituation, or low ſtate of ſociety, in which he lives, he reaps but a ſmall portion of the advantages of ſocial life. Compare the human being, whom we find in this ſituation, with one who has enjoyed, and well improved, the higheſt advantages of ſociety; but whoſe natural powers of mind are not ſtronger than the others; and how different ſhall we find them! They ſcarcely reſemble each other, except in form. The difference of mind, portrayed in their countenances, and diſcovered in their conduct, almoſt marks them as different orders of beings. Such a compariſon will ſhew us the advantages of ſociety, in a refined and improved ſtate, in expanding the human mind, giving dignity to man, and opening the ſources of enjoyment and happineſs to him. By living in well regulated ſociety, man finds perſonal protection from the baſe and ſelfiſh principles and paſſions which are ſometimes predominant in the human breaſt: he finds a ſtronger ſtimulus for genius, in the greater rewards for his exertions and labour: he finds

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he may be more happy in himſelf, by the indulgence of his ſocial affections, and more extenſively uſeful to his fellow men; enjoy more of the bounties of his Creator, and glorify him by more refined ſentiments and obedience, than in an uncultivated ſtate of ſolitude. It is evident from theſe conſiderations that man was intended by his Maker to live in a ſtate of ſociety; that it is a duty enjoined on him by the nature of his conſtitution to aſſociate with his fellow men, and live with them under ſuch laws and regulations as appear beſt adapted to anſwer the purpoſes of his being. He is bound to cultivate the ſocial life, by which his own dignity, uſefulneſs and happineſs are increaſed, and that of his fellow men. It is a duty enjoined upon him by the Author of his being, who requires of him the cultivation of his talents in that manner which will beſt promote his own intereſt and happineſs, in connexion with that of other men. He is not left to his own choice: he cannot follow the bent of his inclinations, uncontrouled by reaſon, uninfluenced by the common good of others, and live by prey and rapine, if he would. The laws of ſociety will bind him to order; and they are the laws of God, who has ordained this order for the benefit of his creature man. We ought to ſuppoſe every inſtitution to come from God, either immediately or mediately, which promotes the improvement of man as a rational being, and beſt increaſes and ſecures his happineſs.

For the due regulation of ſocial life, and that men may reap the greater advantages from aſſociating together, it is neceſſary that rules and laws ſhould be formed for the government of the ſeveral members of the ſociety; and that they ſhould be ſuch as will beſt promote the common intereſt of thoſe who have aſſociated together. This ſocial compact is founded upon the natural right which every man has to preſerve his life and property from violence and depredation. As all men are not wiſe, juſt and benevolent; as all men are not equal in bodily ſtrength, and no individual is capable of reſiſting the united efforts of many againſt his life and property, they muſt aſſociate for mutual protection.

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That the weak, as well as the ſtrong, may be ſecured againſt the injuſtice, cruelty, arbitrary will and power of any individual, or any banditti combined to prey upon others, for theſe purpoſes of defence and protection, the great body of the people unite themſelves in a large ſociety, and create a power, to be exerciſed for their benefit, which ſhall be ſuperior to any power that may ariſe within the ſociety to injure any of its members. A conſtitution is firſt formed, the principles of which are founded on the natural rights of man; that is, the right of perſonal liberty and protection; the rights of conſcience in matters of religion; and the right of peaceably enjoying all the temporal bleſſings of this life, which he can acquire in a ſtate of ſociety without injuring the rights of others. To enſure theſe bleſſings of a free conſtitution, founded on the condition and neceſſities of human nature, perſons of wiſdom and integrity are choſen from among the body of the people to frame ſuch laws and regulations, upon the principles of the conſtitution, as ſhall beſt anſwer the purpoſes expreſſed in it. Perſons thus elected are the repreſentatives of the people at large. They are clothed with authority by them, to act in their ſtead in making laws for the government of the community; and the people bind themſelves to the obſervance of their inſtitutions. That there may be no abuſe of the powers committed to the legiſlative body, in a wiſe and well conſtructed conſtitution, this body is divided, and ſo inveſted with ſeparate powers as to make each part a check upon the other. Both are choſen by the people, and derive their powers from them. That there may be no coalition between the two branches, to uſurp an undelegated power, and deprive the people of their rights and liberties, it is required that theſe legiſlators ſhould hold a certain property in the community, and be intereſted in the public welfare; that their power ſhould not be of long duration; that they ſhould be choſen for a ſhort period of time, and then return to the maſs of the people again, that they may be equally affected with their conſtituents by their own laws. As it is impoſſible that the great body of the people ſhould

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aſſemble to make their own laws, ſo it is that they ſhould ſee them executed. Other perſons are therefore choſen and inveſted with executive powers to ſee them faithfully obſerved and put into execution. Experience has taught mankind, that this executive power is exerciſed much better, and with more ſafety to the people, when placed in the hands of an individual, than when committed to ſeveral perſons. For one man will always feel himſelf more reſponſible for the duties of any office committed ſolely to him, than if others are concerned with him in the exerciſe of it. That this officer, high in power, may not be tempted to abuſe his truſt, he is not only ſubject to the laws himſelf while he governs the community, but he is appointed for a ſhort period of time only. He then returns and mixes with the maſs again, either to enjoy the good, or ſuffer the evil, conſequences of his adminiſtration.

Such a ſyſtem of government cannot be capable of much abuſe, or great danger to the liberties of the people. It appears to be the moſt free and perfect ſyſtem that can be deviſed for man in this ſtate of his exiſtence; beſt adapted to the ſecurity of his rights, and the enjoyment of the bleſſings of ſociety. It gives every latitude to man, which he can and ought to poſſeſs, conſidering the rights of others. It ſecures to him every object he might acquire, even if he diſregarded the rights of others, which can contribute to the improvement and happineſs of his life, taking the *whole* of his exiſtence into view. For no man can advance his own happineſs, by deviating from that line of conduct God has marked out for him. And as God has ſo conſtituted man as to make the greateſt improvement in a ſtate of ſociety, he cannot advance his own happineſs ultimately, without reſpecting the rights of others, as well as his own; without living in the obſervance of thoſe laws which are appointed for the protection and benefit of all. We often ſee many inconveniences, and much unhappineſs, ariſing to thoſe who violate the truſt repoſed in them in the offices of government. And it is certain, that uſurpers loſe more in the *end* than they can gain by uſurpation and the abuſe of power.

A good and righteous government, founded in equity, and adminiſtered with juſtice and impartiality, is one of the greateſt bleſſings of human life, and without it few of them can be enjoyed by the community at large.

From what has been ſaid on the nature and condition of man, and his improvement, it is evident he was made for ſocial life; and that ſtate of ſociety will beſt advance his improvement and happineſs which affords the beſt ſecurity to life and property, the beſt means of expanding his faculties, and the beſt encouragement to his induſtry, by ſecuring to him the fruits of his labour. To ſuch a government every man, who is ſo fortunate as to live under it, is indiſpenſably bound to yield obedience; to reſpect the ſovereign power of it, and ſubmit to its lawful authority and commands.

"As ſociety, by the diſpenſation of God's providence, is neceſſary to mankind, and government is neceſſary for the preſervation of ſociety; ſo is ſovereign power neceſſary to ſupport government; and therefore ſovereign power is eſtabliſhed by the general providence of God; conſequently ſubmiſſion to it is enjoined by the ſame providence. Obedience then to ſovereign, human, civil or temporal power or authority, is commanded by God, and becomes of courſe a conſcientious duty of man. There is no expreſs command or precept of God to veſt it in any particular perſon or perſons; but the exiſtence of civil authority, and conſequently the conſcientious obligation of ſubmitting to it, when lawfully exerciſed, is ſubſtantially, and in effect, enjoined by thoſe general laws, which God has inſtituted for the preſervation of the moral order of mankind, and which are therefore indiſpenſably and uniformly binding upon every human individual, whatever be his ſtation in the community of which he is a member.

"It was but in the ſpecial inſtance of the Jewiſh nation, that God ſelected a particular or choſen people or community, to whom he gave particular laws and particular rules. This formed a theocracy, or a form of government immediately appointed by God; and it laſted for a limited period. All the reſt of mankind were left to their free liberty, to form themſelves into whatever

whatever communities or ſocieties they choſe, and to delegate the ſovereignty of human or temporal power and authority to whomſoever, and in whatever manner, they ſhould find it reaſonable and agreeable. Hence has ariſen the endleſs variety of forms and modes of government, through the ſucceſſion of all ages to the preſent."* Some nations have choſen that of monarchy, in which the ſovereign power is made hereditary; and others, that of republicaniſm, in which the ſovereignty is often changed, and paſſes into different hands at ſhort periods of time.

Without going into the merits or demerits of the former, let it be obſerved, that the government under which we live is of the latter kind. It is republicaniſm. It is a government we have choſen ourſelves, and is that above deſcribed. It is formed upon the broad baſis of civil and religious liberty, in which a man may enjoy all thoſe bleſſings which a ſtate of ſociety can give; all that freedom of action which is conſiſtent with the laws of God, and the rights of others. The laws by which we are governed may be ſaid to have originated from ourſelves; for we chooſe the makers of them. The ſovereign power for their execution is delegated to the chief magiſtrate by ourſelves. He is choſen from among the people, and we declare in the conſtitution how we will be governed by him. Can any thing be more free than ſuch a government as this? Can any better protect the rights and liberty of the ſubject? Or could one more *democratic* have any energy at all? The people at large having choſen this government after deliberate conſideration, it has become binding upon them, and their duty and intereſt go together. In a comparative view with other governments, we are a fortunate, a happy people. For no government on earth is ſo free, and well calculated to make wiſe and virtuous men happy; and no people ever enjoyed ſo much freedom, proſperity and happineſs, in ſo ſhort a period of time, as we have ſince its eſtabliſhment. But let it be remembered, that knowledge and virtue in the people are *abſolutely neceſſary* to the exiſtence of a government ſo free as our own. As

* Plowden's Church and State, p. 24.

As it was originally founded upon the theory of human nature and civil ſociety, and the experience drawn from other nations and governments, ſo the practice of it has juſtified the choice, and ſhewn it to be a wiſe and valuable inſtitution. Having been adopted by us, and put into exerciſe, it has become, in one ſenſe, the law and inſtitution of God; and every individual of the community is conſcientiouſly bound to obey it. Every wiſe and virtuous man will prize it as one of the moſt valuable gifts of God, and offer up his ſupplications, prayers and interceſſions, with thankſgiving, for it; for its chief magiſtrate, and all who are in authority in this government; "that we may lead quiet and peaceable lives, in all godlineſs and honeſty," under their adminiſtration of it. The great end and object of government is, that men may lead quiet and peaceable lives in all *godlineſs*; that is, in the exerciſe of religious and pious duties, undiſturbed by the perſecutions of wicked men: and in all *honeſty*; that is, in the exerciſe of integrity and juſtice, reciprocally performed towards each other. For ſuch a government every man ſhould pray; and, in the poſſeſſion and enjoyment of it, give thanks.

From the ſeveral recommendations in ſcripture, by our Saviour and his apoſtles, of ſubmiſſion to temporal government, the doctrine of paſſive obedience and non-reſiſtance to any government, however corrupt, iniquitous and oppreſſive, however eſtabliſhed by uſurpation and tyrannical means, has been held up and taught by ſome chriſtians to its fulleſt extent.

We cannot go into the full conſideration of this doctrine at preſent. Suffice it to ſay, that God ordained government for the good of mankind, to prevent the evils of anarchy, the evils of uncontrouled paſſions; to protect the lives and property of mankind, and promote their rational improvement and happineſs. But when, through the corruption of rulers, and their abuſe of conſtitutional powers, the government is changed, and theſe benefits ceaſe to reſult from their adminiſtration; the people at large are debaſed and rendered miſerable;

miſerable; their lives inſecure, their religious rights of conſcience invaded, their property torn from them till they are reduced to poverty, to pamper corruption, and promote and extend vice, can it be ſaid that this is the ordinance of God?—the government to which he commands his rational creatures to ſubmit?—in which neither godlineſs or honeſty is ſeen among the rulers?—and in which there is no ſuch thing as enjoying a quiet and peaceable life? Can it be a queſtion, whether in this caſe the body of the people have a *right* to ſay to ſuch corrupt, unfaithful men, "We will not have you any longer to rule over us?" They undoubtedly have a right to ſay it. The only difficulty lies in exerciſing that right in ſuch a cool, deliberate and wiſe manner as ſhall remove the evils they ſuffer; with that wiſdom and diſcretion which ſhall regain the bleſſings they have loſt, or have a right to enjoy; which ſhall guard againſt the evils of anarchy, and a mere change of maſters without any relief from ſuffering; and ſhall eſtabliſh them in freedom, and the enjoyment of the privileges and bleſſings of ſocial life.

The revolutions in government which have recently taken place, and are now in motion, in the European world, hitherto afford melancholy proofs, that the great body of the people do not always gain the end at which they aim by them. We have hitherto ſeen little more than a change of men, without any change of meaſures beneficial to the people at large. They ſtill groan under burdens and oppreſſions; and are not allowed to complain under their preſent rulers, any more than when they were under the power of thoſe who were formerly denominated their *tyrants*. The rights of conſcience are not better reſpected; their lives and property are not more ſecure. If they ſuffered before under military deſpotiſm, they do not appear to ſuffer leſs under the new formed governments, which are evidently controul-

ed by military force. If the former conſtitutions were arbitrary and tyrannical, what benefits of freedom have hitherto reſulted from the exerciſe of thoſe ſet up in their ſtead? If their former rulers abuſed their powers, and, being armed with military ſtrength, committed acts of deſpotiſm on their ſubjects; if they ſeized, impriſoned and baniſhed without trial, not merely the private citizen, but the public officers when in the exerciſe of their conſtitutional duty, have not the preſent rulers done as much, in ſome nations, which have been revolutionized, in violation of the freedom of the ſubject, and the new conſtitutions? And if the revolutionary rulers of the great nation in Europe, which began the reform of government, have ſhewn no more reſpect for the rights of their *own* people, could it be ſuppoſed they would reſpect the rights of foreign nations where they have ſent their armies to carry on the work of political reformation? Have they done it, even to nations at peace with them? But ſuppoſing they had given freedom to their own nation, and that the people of France were now in the full exerciſe of thoſe privileges named in the conſtitution they have adopted, where is the ſpirit of *univerſal philanthropy* with which they ſet out to meliorate the condition of other nations? Has it evaporated in experiment! Or is it ſmothered by ſucceſs, and ſtifled by the luſt of power, ambition and avarice? Or did it never exiſt! Was it the mere art of *deluſion* which ſpoke to the oppreſſed nations this language of philanthropy and freedom?— "People of Italy, the French army comes to break your chains; the French people are the friends of all people; come with confidence to them; your property, religion, and cuſtoms, ſhall be reſpected. We make war as generous enemies, and wiſh only to make war againſt the tyrants who oppreſs you."* This was the

* See Buonaparte's ſpeech to his army before Milan, April 26, 1796.

the language held out to the oppreſſed by theſe *deliverers* of mankind! Compare this language with their conduct when conquerors; and look at the ſituation of the people they had addreſſed with ſo much compaſſion, after their old chains were broken, and their maſters ſubdued. Has not the whole maſs of the people been included in the fruits of the conqueſt?—ſevere requiſitions and contributions levied upon them at large, and collected at the point of the bayonet? Have their "property, religion, and cuſtoms, been reſpected" by the "generous enemy?" How have the conquerors ſhewn their friendſhip? What has been done to beget "confidence in them?" What is their language to the ſame people they pitied ſo much before, when they had conquered "the tyrants who oppreſſed" them? "Remember," ſays the "generous enemy," "you are altogether a conquered country; I am here the legiſlative power, and your heads ſhall fall at the leaſt trouble or diſorder of which you ſhall be the authors."* And have they not been as vindictive in puniſhing any *provoked* offences, or oppoſition that has been made to their arbitrary mandates, as any deſpot againſt whom they ſo loudly exclaim? Have they not made as many exactions from the people whom they came to deliver, as their former maſters ever did? Have they in any inſtance, after cruſhing the former government, generouſly withdrawn their military force, and left the people at liberty to eſtabliſh a free conſtitution by themſelves? Have they not dictated in every government, and controuled the wiſhes of every people, where the ancient order of things has been deſtroyed? Have not the rulers of the "friendly nation" ſold a whole people, whom they firſt delivered from their ancient tyrants, to a deſpot, againſt whoſe arbitrary

* Buonaparte's anſwer to the deputation of Milan.

arbitrary power they have ſaid ſo much; whoſe arms they have ſo long oppoſed in the "cauſe of freedom," as they term their own? Yet, to accommodate their own convenience (not from neceſſity) have not they, who ſtyle themſelves "the friends of all people," ſacrificed the rights of a neutral nation, and delivered this people over, without their conſent, into the hands of a deſpot, to uſe them as he pleaſes? Is it thus they give liberty and free government to other nations? If this has been the conduct of the "friendly nation," what does it in fact differ from the former deſpotiſm? How is the condition of the people meliorated by the change? How have the conquerors proved the truth of this friendly declaration, which infatuated and lulled the people as a charm?—"We war not againſt you, but againſt the tyrants who oppreſs you!" And is it not a fact, that while this republic has expreſſed ſuch pointed diſapprobation of kings and deſpots, ſhe has overturned the governments of moſt of the republics where ſhe came; but has allowed the hereditary ſovereigns (tyrants, as ſhe ſtyles kings and princes) to remain—permitted them to purchaſe a continuance of their power, and a licence to oppreſs, if ſhe may ſhare in the profits of the oppreſſion? For the price of *toleration* for all the thrones which remain in the conquered countries muſt ultimately be paid by the people. Conſequently the people are not only burdened to ſupport their former maſters, but to pay for their maſters' privilege of keeping them in ſubjection. And as it was under the ancient conquerors, when the ſovereigns of the countries they ſubdued were obliged to oppreſs their ſubjects more heavily to pay the exactions of their conquerors, ſo it is now; and the new republic ſeems to be expreſſing her *friendſhip* to the nations ſhe has conquered by the largeneſs of her requiſitions. Are then the ſupreme rulers of this republic ſo inimical to kings as

to

to their people? Do they not aſſume as much haughtineſs as any deſpot? Do they not uſe as high-ſwelling language in ſpeaking of their own power, and dictating the ſubmiſſion of all others to it, as any monarch?* And do not the rulers of this republic already claim homage from other independent nations—inſult and treat with contempt their ſovereignty—trample upon their rights, and evidently aim at univerſal power and dominion? Where then is the difference between the ancient and former ſtate of things, as it reſpects the liberty and enjoyments of mankind, in any government they have changed? Is there any difference, except in name, between the power which now oppreſſes the people, and did then? The only *diſcernible* difference is, the greater extenſion of this power in its oppreſſive effects; in calling tyranny by another name, and decoying mankind within its graſp by the ſpecious pretenſion to philanthropy. But where the government is *tyrannical*, whether it be monarchical or republican, it is never worth while to quarrel about names. Mankind cannot always be deceived by them, and put up with the impoſition of tyranny under the name of liberty. Their eyes begin to be opened. And where this ſubtle ſerpent has entwined itſelf, the people feel the baneful influence of its poiſon, and lament its depredations. But unhappily they at firſt allowed its charm to prevail, and lull them in ſecurity, till it got them within its folds; and now it has inſerted its fangs ſo deeply, they cannot eſcape from its fatal embrace.

Let

* The monarch may gather his pride or haughtineſs from the greatneſs of the nation over which he reigns; but perhaps it may be ſaid, that the rulers of this republic only aſſume a tone of language, which becomes the dignity of the great people over whom they preſide. But republicans ſhould not find fault with the haughtineſs of monarchs, and aſſume as much themſelves. If it be improper in the former, it does not better become the republican character. If haughtineſs be the evidence of a little mind in an individual, it never can add to the dignity of the rulers of a great nation. Such language is too often the effuſion of the *heart*; and, where it is indulged, is very apt to cheriſh and encourage impoſitions in arbitrary and tyrannical actions.

Let their fate be a warning to others, and their ſufferings a ſtimulus to guard thoſe, who are not yet in its power, againſt the danger of its faſcination, which prepares the way for inevitable deſtruction.

I have been led to make the foregoing obſervations on the neceſſity, nature and end of government, and upon the principles of our own, that ſeeing it is calculated to promote our improvement and happineſs, and is therefore become the ordinance of God to us, we may, from a ſenſe of duty to him, and benefit to ourſelves, feel our obligations to obey it; that upon this day, ſet apart by civil authority to humble ourſelves before God, and implore his bleſſing upon our government, we may recollect our ſituation, and our duty, as good ſubjects; recognize the bleſſings we enjoy under our happy conſtitution with thankful hearts, and offer up our prayers to God for their continuance.

Let us contraſt our miſconduct with the bleſſings we have enjoyed, that the ſenſe of our unworthineſs and ingratitude may impreſs deeper humiliation. May a ſenſe of the dangers which hang over us lead us to repentance, and fervent prayer, that God may turn from us theſe tokens of his anger, and cauſe us more highly to eſteem and improve, in future, his ſpiritual and temporal bleſſings.

And let us pray, that God will continue to us our freedom, and our conſtitutions of government; as well that of the ſtate as that of the union; preſerve them in purity, both in their principles and adminiſtration; and that all who are called into public office may be men of religion and virtue, of true patriotiſm and inflexible integrity.

Let us comply with the exhortation in the text, to pray for all that are in authority, and for the proſperity of our government. A ſenſe of our obligations to do this,

this, as chriſtians, will make the duty of obedience more binding upon us. Our ſincere and earneſt prayers, "that we may lead quiet and peaceable lives in all godlineſs and honeſty," under it, will lead us to attend to thoſe things, which will preſerve peace and quietneſs among ourſelves: the greateſt requiſites to which are, reverence for God, and love for our fellow men; the exerciſe of pious duties, and the practice of that "righteouſneſs which exalteth a nation."

By praying for our rulers, we ſhall cultivate a due reverence and regard for them. They are called to the arduous taſk of conducting the affairs of our government: and while they are found faithful in the adminiſtration, in governing according to the principles of the conſtitution, and the laws enacted under it, they highly merit our eſteem, our approbation and praiſe. In ſuch a government as this, where the power primarily reſides in the people, and is delegated to the officers of government only for a ſhort time, a cheerful aſſent to the meaſures which their wiſdom ſhall direct, confidence in their integrity, a unity of ſentiment among ourſelves, and co-operation with them, are abſolutely neceſſary to give ſtrength and energy to the government, force to its laws, and reſpect to its adminiſtration. This countenance and ſupport we *muſt* give to it, if we expect it to anſwer the deſign of its inſtitution, in protecting our lives, liberty and property, and ſecuring to us the bleſſings of civil ſociety.

In this diſcourſe I have alſo been led to the painful taſk of calling your attention, my hearers, to the great and important revolutions in governments which have recently taken place in other nations, and which are now in operation, in the European world; becauſe from our connexion with ſome of thoſe nations we are in danger of ſuffering by the violence of their agitations. Painful indeed has the taſk been to me, to call up to your

your view the errors, or miſconduct, of that nation which began ſo well the work of political reformation, and which ſet out with ſuch *philanthropic* principles to benefit mankind. While thoſe principles appeared to govern, and thoſe virtuous and patriotic men conducted the buſineſs, who firſt undertook it, every true patriot, every lover of mankind, might wiſh them God-ſpeed; and the inhabitants of this country rejoiced in their ſucceſs. But when we ſee thoſe men driven from the ſtage of action, or deſtroyed by the violence of others, who have abandoned thoſe firſt principles, and aſſumed a different conduct; when we ſee that the benefits expected do not reſult from the revolution; the liberties of other nations attacked, and our own *menaced*, is it not the duty which every man owes to his country, to point out the danger ariſing from ſuch conduct, and call the attention of his fellow citizens to it? The warning voice has reached our ears from the ſeat of government. Our CHIEF MAGISTRATE has called us to conſider our danger and our duty; declaring that we are "placed in a hazardous and afflictive ſituation, by the unfriendly diſpoſition, conduct and demands of a foreign power, evinced by repeated refuſals to receive our meſſengers of reconciliation and peace, by depredations on our commerce, and the infliction of injuries on very many of our fellow citizens." We have ſeen the ground on which this danger is ſtated to us by the Executive. We ſee, in part, the evil deſigns which that foreign power has formed againſt us, in the diſpatches from our Envoys, and on what it builds its proſpect of ſucceſs. It is on its "diplomatic ſkill" in ſowing the ſeeds of diſcord among us, and dividing the people from their rulers; by creating jealouſies and miſtruſt in our minds, and thereby weakening the energies of our government, and rendering us defenceleſs againſt their bolder attacks. Thus they

they would prepare us for the ſame impoſitions they have laid on other neutral nations. They wiſh to conquer us by their *arts*, as they have others by their arms; that our government may be under their controul, and our property under their *requiſition*. This they have done to others, and thus they threaten us. It is only as a warning againſt their evil deſigns I have called up their conduct towards other nations to your view, that their example may be a beacon to us. We muſt be on the watch againſt this evil, to prevent its nearer approaches: for it has already come too nigh to us for our quietude and ſafety. We muſt be firmly united among ourſelves, to prevent its ſtealing further upon us: for it comes in an inſidious way; and, if we are not well guarded, it will ſeize us before we are aware of it. It has not, till lately, approached us with the bold menace of an enemy; but has been ſtealing upon our hearts with the kiſſes of an Abſalom, who weaned the affections of his father's ſubjects from him, and excited them to rebellion againſt him, by making *unjuſt* repreſentations of his government, and pretending to be their *better* friend.

But while we have the privilege of chooſing our own rulers, and changing them at ſhort periods, we cannot be in danger of tyranny from them, if we adhere to the rules of our conſtitution. While we chooſe them from among the moſt wiſe and virtuous of our citizens, we ought to believe them capable of conducting our political affairs aright; and not be jealous of them, and miſtruſt their wiſdom and integrity, without any good evidence of their folly and unfaithfulneſs in the adminiſtration of government. While they govern according to the rules of our conſtitution, they merit our confidence, and are entitled to our obedience and ſupport; and it is the duty of every man to give it to them.

We ought alſo to conſider how great the taſk of go-

vernment is, to thoſe men who are placed in the *firſt* offices of it; that the pecuniary rewards in *our* government are ſmall, compared with the labour and anxiety they undergo; and that they deſerve our commendation, and not our cenſure, when they do *well*. And we ought to conſider them as doing well, when they adhere to the rules of the conſtitution; and when we proſper under their adminiſtration, unleſs our proſperity be interrupted by others, over whom they have no controul; which can be no fault of our rulers. It is diſcouraging to able and virtuous men, to undertake the adminiſtration of our government—men who could live more at their eaſe, or gain greater pecuniary rewards for their labour, in private life, without the hazard of reputation, if they muſt be expoſed to unjuſt cenſure and calumny; be traduced in their characters, as guilty of hypocriſy; of entertaining the vileſt views of ambition, and ſacrificing the honour and intereſt of the community to perſonal emolument, without foundation. When they have had repeated, and continual, ſlander thrown upon them, in ſome public papers, but have been able to vindicate their adminiſtration by the rules of the conſtitution, and juſtify their meaſures by circumſtances exiſting at the time, notwithſtanding which there is no relaxation of abuſe, and ſome of it of the meaneſt and vileſt kind; ſhould we not miſtruſt the *purity* of the fountain from whence it flows, and the *patriotic* intentions of thoſe who make ſuch *free* uſe of it? Some men, through ignorance, or miſtaken zeal, may be honeſt in their intentions, and think they are doing "God ſervice" by it. But thoſe political intriguers, who have long ſince diſcarded a belief of HIS agency in the affairs of this world, *well* know how to make uſe of that zeal and political ignorance to carry on their views againſt the government. They know, that the power of republican governments reſides in the people. To

deſtroy

deſtroy that government, they muſt weaken the power by dividing the people. And they have ſpared no pains, and left no meaſures untried, to do it. But when ſuch men as a WASHINGTON and an ADAMS cannot be truſted with the limited powers of our conſtitution, and eſcape cenſure and calumny—men, who had been ſo long and faithfully tried in the cauſe of our country, previous to their appointment to the office of chief magiſtrate, who had given ſuch evidence of their wiſdom, integrity and patriotiſm, where ſhall we find men whom we can truſt, and who will not be ſlandered?—where ſhall we look among all our citizens for characters of more integrity and wiſdom?—who can have higher pretenſions to our confidence, can give better ſecurity for a *faithful* adminiſtration of government, or whoſe real merit can better turn aſide the ſhafts of calumny, and prevent its malignity on the government? If ſuch men be not worthy of your confidence, we are hopeleſs indeed. And when we become ſo corrupt, or ſo much the dupes of artifice, as to diſcard and change theſe for their oppoſers, we may expect our conſtitution will be changed alſo. Or, like one which we have as an example before our eyes, it may exiſt in *name*, but will not protect us from confiſcations and banſhment without trial by JURY—that boaſted right of freemen, that palladium of liberty. Then we may expect to ſee in the adminiſtration, a chief magiſtrate who will addreſs us in ſuch language as this: "I leave you the *liberty* of your republic," but "*I* will compoſe for you a legiſlative body of wiſe and honeſt men!!"*

To ſuch a conſtruction of *liberty*, who of us will conſent? And if the ſame be meant by *wiſe* and *honeſt* men, under ſuch a *free* government who of us would chooſe to live, while we can enjoy our own? That we may continue to enjoy it, let us guard againſt every art and deſign

* See Buonaparte's ſpeech to the deputation of the city of Milan.

deſign formed againſt it; adhere to its principles, and live in the practice of all ſocial and political virtue, and in the exerciſe of all pious and moral duties. Then may we put our truſt in God, and look to him for deliverance in all times of danger. And we have reaſon, from our paſt experience, to put our truſt in him. How often has he delivered us when in imminent danger? In the early ſtage of our ſtruggle for liberty, when the enemy bore down all oppoſition, and ſpread himſelf like a torrent through the country; when deſpair was in almoſt every countenance, how did he inſpire the illuſtrious WASHINGTON to attempt the ſcene at Trenton, and turn the ſcale of victory in our favour, with a few men;—like Jonathan, who, with his armour bearer, ſmote the hoſt of the Philiſtines, becauſe the hand of the Lord was with him! When an army from the north poured in upon us, and threatened our deſtruction, and we ſaw no adequate means of ſtopping its progreſs, how did he put his hook into the noſe of this enemy, and deliver him into our hands, in a very unexpected manner! When the treachery of an Arnold endangered our country, and the capture of our military chief, in what a remarkable manner was that conſpiracy detected and defeated! The *atheiſt* may look to natural cauſes for theſe events, and reſt in them. I do not preſume to ſay, they were effected by miracles. We ſaw the natural means which were uſed to produce them. But who could *foreſee*, or did, that ſuch means were adequate to *ſuch* effects? The wiſeſt atheiſt, and the profoundeſt politician, could not have conjectured that *ſome* of theſe events could have been brought about by ſuch means. They were like the arrow from the bow drawn at a venture; which was directed by the HAND OF PROVIDENCE through the joints of the harneſs, to effect the death of the king of Iſrael, according to propheſy. God often effected great things for us by ſmall

means

means in the courſe of our revolution. He has done much to ſhew us (if we had not been convinced before) that an INTELLIGENT BEING governs the world;—"that the MOST HIGH rules in the kingdoms of men." And what he has done for us is ſufficient to confirm our truſt in him, and lead us ſtill to hope in his goodneſs. Let us be humble, repent, and be virtuous, and we may rely on his protection; that he will preſerve us as an INDEPENDENT people. As we ſee how he formerly reſcued us when in imminent danger, ſo we may conſider the diſcoveries made at this *critical* period, of the "unfriendly diſpoſition" of the rulers of that nation with whom we have been ſo intimately connected, in ſome meaſure, as the act of *his providence*; and that he means to ſave us.

But we muſt ſtill work by the means he has given us. We muſt have confidence in our own rulers, and uſe our own ſtrength for defence. By truſting to their wiſdom and information, and putting confidence in them, we ſhall have nothing to fear from the foreign influence of the rulers of any nation who may wiſh to convert us to their own uſe. By unanimity among ourſelves, in the determination to ſupport our own government, we need not fear the ſucceſs of any foreign power againſt us. Let us avoid all party ſpirit and contention; treat each other with mildneſs in the diſcuſſion of political opinions, and our rulers with reſpect; and be of one mind with regard to our government, THAT WE WILL OPPOSE ALL FOREIGN INFLUENCE AND INNOVATION IN IT. Let us not be actuated by the ſpirit of jealouſy. In whatever inſtances our own public intereſt coincides with that of any other nation, let us not think that our rulers are governed by an undue partiality to that nation, to the prejudice of any other, becauſe they purſue thoſe meaſures which will promote our *own*. But rather let us think they

they are faithful to the truſt repoſed in them, and act wiſely; that they act upon better information than we have, are the beſt judges of what ought to be done, and what will beſt ſecure our rights and privileges, and promote our national proſperity and happineſs. With this confidence in them, and unanimity among ourſelves, let us earneſtly pray for the government of our own nation, and of all others, that they may be ſo formed and adminiſtered, that all men "may lead quiet and peaceable lives" under their adminiſtration, "in all godlineſs and honeſty: for" ſuch effuſions of the heart, accompanied with correſponding actions, are "good and acceptable in the ſight of God our ſaviour."

AMEN.

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